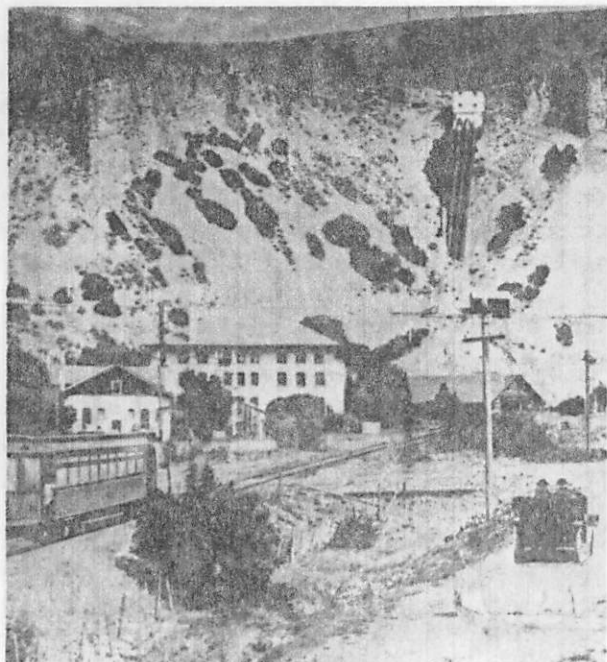


the Nunn's Station which was operational in 1897. By the next year the turbine provided 750 kilowatts of power to a gold mine and a mill in Mercur, Utah, thirty-two miles away. This was a milestone in the history of electrical transmission because this electricity was being transmitted by the first 44,000-volt transmission line built in the United States.

In 1900, the Telluride Power Company was formed. The Nunn's Station was soon replaced by the Olmstead Plant which became operational in 1904. It supplied surrounding areas and increasingly distant areas (no farther than 50 miles away) with electricity.

The Olmstead Plant was unique in that it was equipped to provide on-the-job training in electrical



OLMSTEAD PLANT  
Courtesy BYU Archives

engineering for its employees. Mr. L. L. Nunn conceived this company-employee relationship. His brother, Paul Nunn, directed the program, also used at other plants, that eventually became the Telluride Institute. The Telluride Association, as it was named in 1911, is presently seated at Cornell University. The impact, though, of that early program is remarkable. At the time, the Olmstead Plant offered the only competent training program in electrical engineering besides the program taught at Ohio State. Some young men from the bench area were trained under this two-year program and became outstanding engineers.

In 1912, Utah Power and Light Company was formed; it purchased the Telluride Power Company, which included the Olmstead Plant. This plant is still operated under the direction of Utah Power and Light Company.

## TRANSPORTATION

State Street in Orem was originally established as part of the great corridor highway that linked Salt Lake City with Southern Utah and California. State Street opened for travel in the 1850's, was eight rods wide and ran between what is now 2000 South and 2000 North in Orem. What originally was a dusty, rutted, rocky road in the summer, and a muddy, sloshy road in the winter is now a paved, modern road that is part of U. S. Highway 91.

The transition from buggies and carriages to automobiles did not occur overnight on Provo Bench. The evolution of modern transportation was gradual, yet inevitable and helpful to the benchland. The creaky Model-T's and the fragile trucks that appeared early in the century on the bench can't compare with the cars and diesel trucks that now traverse Utah's highways, but they did increase trade with neighboring towns and cities.

Many roads were graveled in order to strengthen them. The old Provo Canyon Road was graveled in 1911-12. Early settlers hauled loads of rock from their benchland farms to gravel the old Canyon Road. The highway department crushed the rock to make the hard gravel. As transportation improved, trade and commercial activity increased.

By 1910, Provo Bench was becoming a prosperous agricultural community. Accessibility to outside markets inevitably required a railroad. Electrically driven railroads were fairly new, so it is understandable why in 1913 "newspapers of Utah were virtually unanimous in proclaiming the building of the Orem Railroad the biggest event of that year." The Salt Lake and Utah Railroad, or the Orem Line as it was called by many people, was a 67-mile electric rail line financed and constructed by A. J. Orem and Company under the direction of Walter C. Orem. The line from Salt Lake to Provo, which passed through Provo Bench, was opened for electric car service on 24 July, 1913. By 1917, the Orem Line extended from Salt Lake to Payson.

A railroad depot was eventually built in Orem, but because of highway improvements and increased use of automobiles in the 1920's, passenger business declined on the Orem Line. In the 1930's, the line went into receivership, and a foreclosure sale of all properties took place in the first few months of 1938.

## A NEW NAME FOR THE BENCH

Some people on the bench recognized the need for an organization that would promote better business conditions. One day in April, 1914, Oscar H. Anderson, a salesman, rode on horseback to nearly every house on the bench trying to get residents to attend a commercial meeting to be held at Parcell's